Washington Headquarters Services

Telework Program Overview

WHS Human Resources Directorate
Labor & Management Employee Relations
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WHS Telework Program Overview

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Telework Basics

What is Telework?

Telework is an arrangement in which employees work from an alternate worksite:

- Home
- GSA Telework Center
- Other Location

Telework helps the organization to achieve its mission while giving flexibility to its employees.

Benefits of Telework

<u>For the Organization:</u>

- Promotes the organization as an employer of choice by offering employees more flexible work arrangements.
- Improves employee effectiveness.
- Allows work to continue during emergencies or other closures.
- Reduces office overcrowding and facilities costs.
- Provides a possible alternative to accommodate employees with disabilities.

Benefits of Telework (cont.)

For the Employee:

- Reduces commuting time and costs.
- Provides a less distracting and more comfortable work environment.
- Allows for more flexible work

For Society:

- Reduces traffic and parking congestion.
- Decreases energy consumption and pollution emissions.

Types of Telework

Regular or Recurring Telework

- Employees work at least 1 day per bi-weekly pay period at an alternate worksite.
- Regular/recurring telework is part of an approved work schedule.

Ad-Hoc or Situational Telework

- Employees work at an alternate worksite occasionally, on a one-time or irregular basis.
- Telework of less than 1 day per pay period is considered situational.

Telework Criteria & Qualifications

Telework is appropriate in many circumstances and agencies are required to offer telework to eligible employees. However, certain conditions must be met in order to qualify for telework.

Qualifying Factors:

- **Position Eligibility**
- **Employee Eligibility**
- **Suitability of the Alternate Worksite**

Ultimately, telework must ***support the mission***. Telework is not an employee entitlement. Management may not authorize or may terminate telework if it is not compatible with the organization's mission.

Telework Criteria & Qualifications

Position Eligibility

The eligibility of positions is determined according to ***functions*** and ***duties*** of the position. Telework may be appropriate if work activities are portable and may be performed effectively outside the office.

Suitable Positions Often Have:

- Quantifiable or project-oriented job tasks.
- Easy off-site access to needed technology.

Examples of Suitable Tasks:

- Intensive writing
- Policy development
- Research and analysis
- Telephone-intensive
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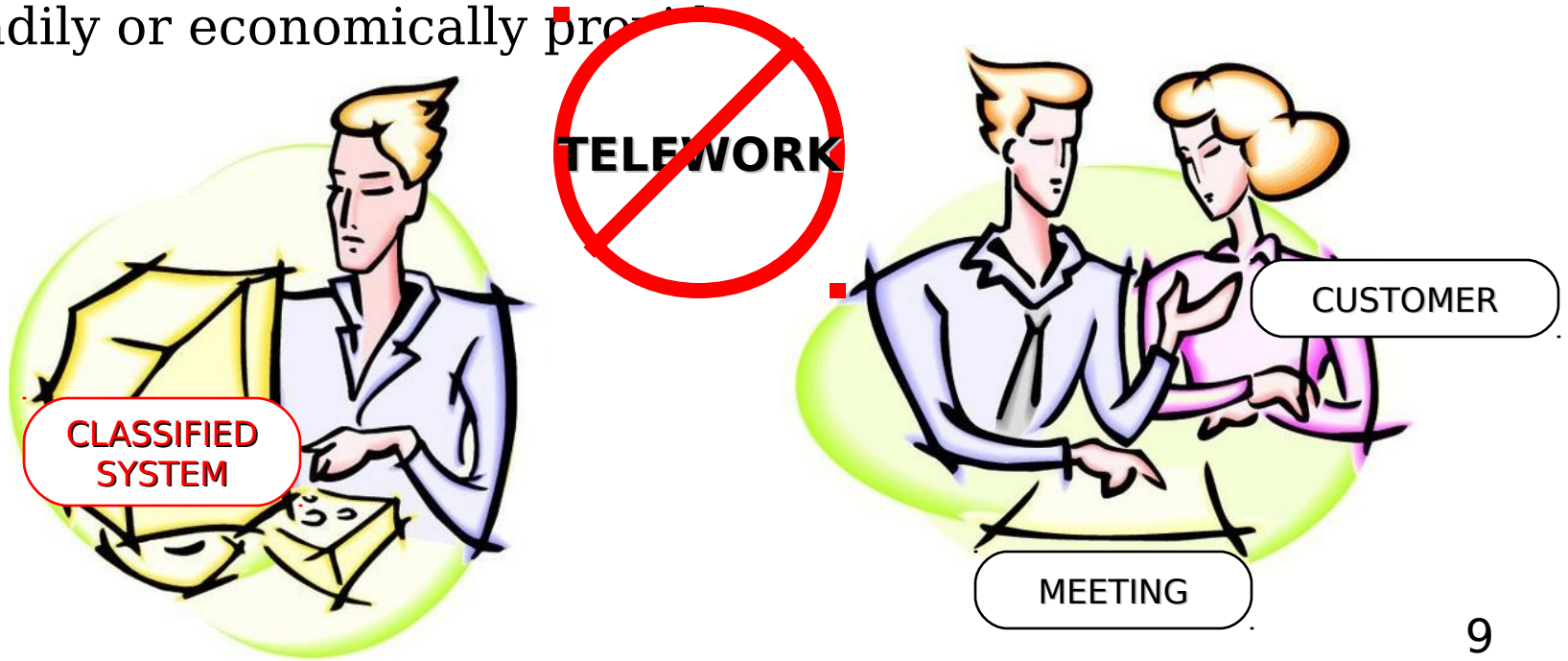
Telework Criteria & Qualifications

Position Eligibility (cont.)

Telework May *NOT* Be Appropriate for Jobs that Require:

- Extensive face-to-face contact with supervisor, co-workers & clients.
- Frequent access to classified material.
- Special facilities or equipment that the agency cannot readily or economically pro



Telework Criteria & Qualifications

Employee Eligibility

In order to qualify for telework, an employee must demonstrate characteristics indicating his or her ability to effectively work away from the traditional worksite.

<u>Employee Characteristics Suitable for Telework:</u>

- Dependable, responsible and conscientious.
- Able to work independently and without close supervision.
- Highly motivated.
- Able to prioritize work and manage time wisely.
- Consistently demonstrate an acceptable level of performance.

Employee Eligibility (cont.)

Employees that are NOT Eligible for Telework:

- Trainees, student/summer-hires or employees in entry-level positions.
- Shift workers.
- Employees requiring daily face-to-fa interactions at the office.
- Employees demonstrating a less tha acceptable level of performance.

Telework Criteria & Qualifications

Suitability of Alternate Worksite

The location for telework is any approved place other than the official duty station of the employee. Generally, this is the ***employee's home*** or a General Services Administration Interagency ***Telework Center***. The suitability of the alternate worksite must be determined and the site approved prior to teleworking.

Considerations for Working at Home

- Employee must complete the Telework Agreement and Safety Checklist.
- Employee must designate one area in the home as the official workstation.
- The organization is not responsible for employee's expenses (e.g. utilities) for telework.
- Teleworking limits the organization's liability for an employee's property or injury.

Note: Telework is not a substitute for dependent care.

Suitability of Alternate Worksite (Continued)

Working at a GSA Telework Center

- The employee must arrange for work at a GSA telework center. (A list of telework center locations and contact information can be found at www.telework.gov.

- DoD reimburses the telework center for its costs to support the employee. The employee and supervisor must complete the Telecommuting Facility Reimbursement Sheet **on-line** at http://www.gsa.gov/teleworkcenters. Paper forms are no longer accepted.

Suitability of Alternate Worksite (Continued)

Working Outside the Commuting Area

- Official duty should be established based on the alternate worksite.
- Employee will need access to the same supplies they use at the traditional site (printer, paper, toner, post-its, pens, etc.).
- Determine how the employee will receive reimbursement for faxes, copies, and mailings.
- Determine how the employee will be reimbursed for official long distance telephone calls (install telephone lines, issue a calling card or complete Standard Form (SF) 1164, to receive reimbursement).
- The organization funds all work-related travel outside the employee's normal commuting area, including travel to the traditional worksite.

Performing and Managing Telework

Initiating Telework

1. Determining Eligibility
2. Establishing an Arrangement
3. Equipping for Telework

Performing Telework (employee-oriented)

1. Employee Telework Guidelines
2. Time and Attendance

Managing Telework

1. Establishing Work Requirements
2. Managing from Afar
3. Use of Telework in Emergency Situations
4. Terminating Telework
5. Additional Management Responsibilities

Initiating Telework

1. Determining Suitability and Eligibility

- Supervisors should ***identify*** positions that are eligible for telework and ***inform*** employees of the opportunity to telework.

- Employees interested in telework should ***assess*** their own eligibility; if they would like to telework, they should discuss this with their supervisor and ***request*** to telework.

- Supervisors should ***consider*** the request and ***determine*** whether telework is appropriate.

Initiating Telework (cont.)

2. Establishing an Arrangement

When the Supervisor and Employee agree that telework is a good option, they should:

- Establish ***work requirements/job expectations***
- Determine a telework ***schedule***
- Complete the required ***forms***:
  - ✓ Telework Agreement
  - ✓ Safety Checklist (for at-home teleworking)
  - ✓ GSA Telework Facility Reimbursement Sheet (for teleworking at a GSA telework center)

Initiating Telework (cont.)

3. Equipping for Telework

- Two main ***guidelines*** in equipping an employee for telework:
  1. Provide the employee with the tools he or she needs to perform the assigned work from the alternate worksite.
  2. Comply with regulations protecting DoD systems, networks, equipment and information.
- Possible ***sources of equipment*** include:
  - Employee's personal equipment
  - GSA Telework Center equipment
  - Government-issued equipment

- In equipping for telework, supervisors and teleworking employees should:
  - ✓Establish communications (email, telephone, fax)
  - ✓Arrange for access to networks, if needed
  - ✓Issue government equipment, if needed/available

Initiating Telework (cont.)

3. Equipping for Telework (cont.)

Use of **Government-issued Equipment**:

- Each component must determine how best to furnish equipment needed for telework.
- Government-issued equipment may only be used by authorized users for official business.
- Employee is responsible for protecting government-issued equipment and information.

WARNING: Any work involving CLASSIFIED information may NOT be performed by telework. Check with your security manager to discuss options for accessing classified information at any location other than the traditional worksite.

Initiating Telework (cont.)

3. Equipping for Telework (cont.)

Use of **Personal Computers**:

- **May NOT** access ***DoD systems or networks*** remotely. Such remote access can only be performed using government-issued equipment.
- **May NOT** be used to work on ***sensitive, unclassified data*** (including information protected by the *Privacy Act* or *For Official Use Only* information). This must be done with government-issued equipment.

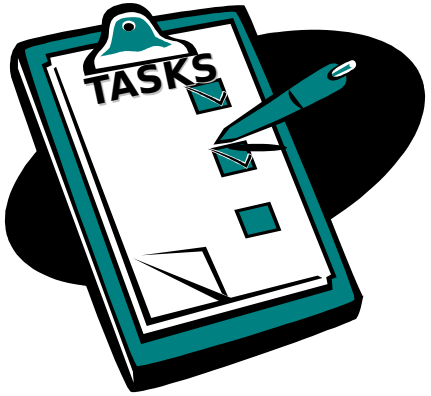
- **MAY** be used to work on non-sensitive, unclassified information, with authorization of the Organization's Designated Approving Authority. Check with your supervisor to see if using your own equipment is an option.
- In some limited circumstances, use of personal computers may be authorized for work on sensitive unclassified information. Check with your supervisor to see if this is an option.

Note: DoD is not responsible for maintaining employee's personal equipment, or for operating costs associated with such use (i.e. utilities).

Performing Telework

1. Employee Telework Guidelines

- Employees and supervisors should ***establish clear work requirements*** and job expectations to be accomplished through telework.
- Employees should carefully ***plan*** and ***prepare*** for each telework session.
- Employees should maintain open ***communication*** with their supervisor, co-workers and clients during telework.
- Employees should ***avoid distractions*** at the alternate work location.



Performing Telework (cont.)

2. Time and attendance

- Teleworking becomes part of an employee's regular work schedule and employees must maintain their regularly scheduled hours of duty while teleworking.
- Telework is compatible with alternate work schedules.

Managing Telework

1. Establishing work requirements/job expectations

As with any effective management, the first step is to ***establish clear work requirements*** and job expectations.

2. Managing employees from afar

Supervisors should expect the same level of performance from employees, regardless of their work location. Supervisors can manage the performance of teleworking employees by:

- Maintaining regular ***communication*** during telework.
- ***Evaluating*** the employee's work products.
- Conducting ***feedback*** sessions to discuss the telework arrangement and

Managing Telework (cont.)

3. Use of Telework in Emergency situations / closure

In situations where normal government operations are interrupted (because of a natural disaster or weather-related closure), supervisors can direct teleworking employees to continue to work from their alternate worksite. This contingency can be written into the telework arrangement agreement.

4. Termination

If the supervisor determines that the telework arrangement is no longer appropriate, he or she can terminate the agreement with advance written notice. Since telework is voluntary, employees may also request for the telework agreements to be terminated by providing their supervisor advance written notice.

Managing Telework (cont.)

5. Additional management responsibilities

In order for Telework to be successful, each WHS-serviced Organization must take an active part in managing the program.

Organizations must:

- Designate a *Telework Coordinator* to administer and oversee implementation of the program within the organization.
- Identify eligible positions and provide eligible employees with the opportunity to telework.
- Establish and maintain a tracking system to enable reporting to the WHS Telework Program Coordinator on

Additional information on the DoD Telework Program can be found at CPMS website:

http://www.cpms.osd.mil

Contact the WHS Human Resources Labor & Management Employee Relations Team at 703-699-1824 with questions.

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